



The 20th Annual *Write Women Back Into History* Essay Contest

Essay Theme: *Women Inspiring Hope and Possibility*

This year's theme incorporates both women from history, who led and won struggles for equality and civil rights, created and advanced educational and professional opportunities, and made great contributions to the arts, sciences, and humanistic causes, and innovative women of today who further these efforts and continue to expand the frontiers of possibility for generations to come. Students are encouraged to write about the accomplishments in the life of a woman who has made a difference to them and to society. (Essays about Iowa women are encouraged.)

- Conduct an oral interview with someone who has made a significant impact on society--a community member or a neighbor who has contributed something unique to our society. For ideas on community women about whom to write, consider corresponding with your school and local libraries, chamber of commerce, and city hall. Interviews are strongly encouraged.
- Or, research the life's work and contributions of a famous woman, living or deceased, who made significant contributions. Accuracy and citing sources are required. (A student's own thoughts on the significance of the woman's contributions are important.)
- Identify 1) why the woman should be written into history (i.e., what meaningful contributions has she made to her community, the state, nation, or world?), 2) why she is important to her community, and 3) why she is important to the student. Students should consider what people would learn about us from this essay 50 years from now. A successful essay will discuss why the student finds the subject to be a role model, not merely be a biographical sketch.

Entry Categories: 1. 6th and 7th grade 2. 8th and 9th grade

Only **one** finalist may be submitted from **each classroom**. A teacher with five different classrooms may submit five different essays. **Each student** may submit only **one** essay.

Entry Format:

- Each essay should be no more than **600 words long**. Please proofread the essay before submission.
- Submit **three copies of each essay** with a completed **entry form** attached to the back side of each copy of the essay.
- **Type**, if possible, or write legibly in black ink on 8 1/2" x 11" white paper.

Contact Person: Lori M. SchraderBachar, telephone, 515/281-4470 or 800/558-4427; fax, 515/242-6119; or e-mail, lori.schraderbachar@iowa.gov.

Send to: Iowa Commission on the Status of Women, Department of Human Rights, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319.

Deadline: Essays must be **postmarked** no later than **Friday, January 23, 2004**.

Sponsored by the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women, the Iowa Department of Education, and the State Historical Society of Iowa

Special Awards:

A special award offered by the State Historical Society of Iowa, the **Howard Draper Brayton and Jessie Sellman Brayton Award**, will be presented to the **first place** winner in each of the two grade categories. The winning students will receive a \$25 cash prize.

Best Essays on Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math: Women have always made significant contributions to the fields of science, technology, engineering and math, but historically those contributions have not been valued as highly as those of men. The Program for Women in Science and Engineering at Iowa State University and the Women in Science and Engineering Program at the University of Iowa will award prizes to the best essays that focus on a woman in science, technology, engineering and math. The first place winner in each grade division will receive a \$25 cash prize, and the second place winner in each will receive a book award. All other contest rules apply.

Edith Rose Murphy Sackett Award for the Best Essay on Volunteerism: Edith Rose Murphy Sackett was a volunteer leader for more than 57 years. The award, established by the Spencer branch of the American Association of University Women, will be presented as a certificate to a student whose entry best focuses on the life of a woman who dedicated much of her life to public service and volunteerism. All other contest rules apply.

Criteria for Judging:

- accuracy and use of standard English procedures: correct punctuation, spelling, grammar (5 points)
- explanation of why the woman should be written into history and how she is important to others and the student (10 points)
- effective use of descriptive language (5 points)
- voice and originality (10 points)
- adherence to all entry format rules

Judging: Winning essays will be chosen by a panel composed of at least a dozen Iowa authors, historians, activists, and representatives of the sponsoring agencies.

Prizes:

- Prizes will be awarded to the first three places in each of the two grade divisions. Prizes will include Women's History Month books, posters, and other memorabilia.
- The first, second, and third place winner in each of the two grade divisions will be honored in a ceremony at the State Capitol and introduced in the House and Senate in March 2004.
- Teachers who sponsor the winning students' essays will receive classroom resources, such as posters and books, and will be invited to attend the awards ceremony.
- Winners, their hometown media, and *The Des Moines Register*, will be notified prior to the beginning of Women's History Month (March 2004).
- All winners and finalists will receive a certificate of participation signed the Governor.

Dear Principals, Teachers, and Librarians:

March 2004 will be designated as **Women's History Month** by the Governor, the Iowa Senate and House of Representatives, President George W. Bush, and the United States Congress, and celebrated in hundreds of communities and thousands of classrooms in a nationwide observance. The 2004 theme is ***Women Inspiring Hope and Freedom***.

To give students a deeper and more relevant appreciation of women's roles in history, the Iowa Commission on the Status of Women, the Iowa Department of Education, and the State Historical Society of Iowa are sponsoring the annual statewide essay contest, *Write Women Back Into History*, for students in **grades 6-9**. We are hoping that your school will participate in this event. Feel free to share this information with the history, science, and social science teachers in your school.

We encourage classes to get an early start so that there is plenty of time for students to write the essays and for teachers to choose and submit the winning nominee from each class. **All essays must be postmarked by Friday, January 23, 2004.**

Each finalist will receive a certificate signed by the Governor. The winning essays will be recognized and prizes will be awarded at a ceremony in the State Capitol during Women's History Month. All winners' names will be released to the press; a special effort will be made to inform students' local media of their honor. Sponsor teachers of winning essays will receive classroom resources. Finally, whether or not you choose to participate in the essay contest, we would like you to know of the abundance of curriculum materials available from the National Women's History Project, 3343 Industrial Drive #4, Santa Rosa CA 95403-2060, 707/636-2888, nwhp@aol.com, or www.nwhp.org.

OFFICIAL 2004 WWBH ESSAY CONTEST ENTRY FORM

(Attach a copy of this form to the back side of the original entry and each of the two copies.)

Student's Name _____ Grade _____

Student's Home Address _____

_____ Student's Phone # _____

Student's E-mail Address _____

School's Name/Address _____

School's Phone # _____ School's Fax # _____

Teacher's First and Last Name _____

Teacher's E-mail Address _____

Name of Woman Featured in Essay _____

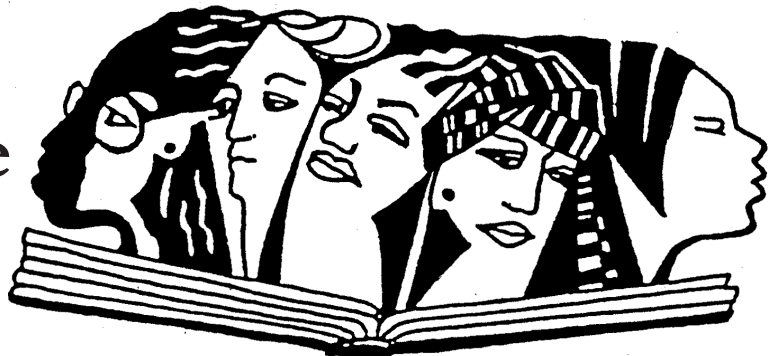
Name/Address of Local Newspaper _____

State Senator (not U.S.) _____ State Representative (not U.S.) _____

**Send three copies to: Iowa Commission on the Status of Women,
Department of Human Rights, Lucas State Office Building, Des Moines, IA 50319**

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